

REMARKS

[0001] Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims of the application. Claims 1, 4-9, 17-20, 29, 32, 35-37, and 40 are presently pending. Claims 1, 4, 8, 21, 32, 35, and 37 are amended herein, including previously withdrawn claim 21. Previously pending claims 2, 3, 33, and 34 are cancelled herein. Previously withdrawn claims 30 and 31 are also cancelled herein. No new claims are added herein.

[0002] As discussed in further detail below, each of the pending independent claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the restriction requirement dated 05/21/07 be withdrawn, and claims 10-16, 21-28, 38, and 39 be rejoined. Each of claims 10-16, 21-28, 38, and 39 ultimately depend from an allowable base claim.

Formal Request for an Interview

[0003] If the Examiner's reply to this communication is anything other than allowance of all pending claims, then I formally request an interview with the Examiner. I encourage the Examiner to call me—the undersigned representative for the Applicant—so that we can talk about this matter so as to resolve any outstanding issues quickly and efficiently over the phone.

[0004] Please contact me or my assistant to schedule a date and time for a telephone interview that is most convenient for both of us. While email works great for us, I welcome your call to either of us as well. Our contact information may be found on the last page of this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

[0005] Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for allowing claims 19, 20, and 29. These claims are not amended herein, and therefore remain allowable. None of these claims have been amended, and therefore they remain in condition for allowance.

Claim Amendments

[0006] Without conceding the propriety of the rejections herein and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicant amends claims 1, 4, 8, 21, 32, 35, and 37 herein.

- Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the elements of claims 2 and 3, and represents claim 3, re-written in independent form.
- Claim 4 is amended to incorporate the elements of claim 1, thereby being re-written in independent form.
- Claim 8 is amended to maintain consistent language with the base claim.
- Claim 21 is amended to correct a typographical error.
- Claim 32 is amended to incorporate the elements of claim 34, and represents claim 34, re-written in independent form.
- Claim 35 is amended to incorporate the elements of claim 32, thereby being re-written in independent form.
- Claim 37 is amended to incorporate the elements of claim 32, thereby being re-written in independent form.

Formal Matters

[0007] This section addresses any formal matters (e.g., objections) raised by the Examiner.

Drawings

[0008] The Examiner indicates that Figure 2 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. Herewith, Applicant submits a replacement drawing page to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner.

Claims

[0009] The Examiner objects to claims 3-7, 33-35, and 37 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner further indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Based on the amendments presented herein, Applicant submits that each of these claims is allowable.

Substantive Matters

Claim Rejections under §§ 102 and 103

[0010] Claims 1, 2, 8, 9, 17, 18, 32, 36, and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 and/or §103. In light of the amendments presented herein, Applicant submits that these rejections are moot. Accordingly, Applicant asks the Examiner to withdraw these rejections.

[0011] The Examiner's rejections are based upon the following references alone and/or in combination:

- **Schoenblum:** *Schoenblum*, US Patent No. 7,190,723;
- **Lin:** *Lin, et al.*, US Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0223735;
- **Yoshinari:** *Yoshinari*; US Patent Application Publication No. 2007/0165715; and
- **Assuncao:** *Assuncao*, US Patent No. 6,226,328.

Anticipation Rejections

Based upon Schoenblum

[0012] The Examiner rejects claims 1, 8, 17, 18, 32, and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Schoenblum. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of these claims. Based on the reasons given below, Applicant asks the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of these claims.

Independent Claim 1

[0013] Claim 1 is amended herein to include the elements of claim 2 and claim 3, rendering claim 1 allowable. Accordingly, Application requests that the 102 rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Dependent Claims 8, 17, and 18

[0014] Claims 8, 17, and 18 depend upon independent claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable. It is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowable base claim is also allowable. Additionally, one or more of these claims may also be allowable for additional independent reasons.

Independent Claim 32

[0015] Claim 32 is amended herein to include the elements of claim 34, rendering claim 32 allowable. Accordingly, Application requests that the 102 rejection of claim 32 be withdrawn.

Dependent Claim 36

[0016] Claim 36 depends upon independent claim 32. As discussed above, claim 32 is allowable. It is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowable base claim is also allowable. Additionally, claim 36 may also be allowable for additional independent reasons.

Obviousness Rejections

Based upon Schoenblum in view of Lin

[0017] The Examiner rejects claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schoenblum in view of Lin. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims and asks the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of these claims.

[0018] Claim 2 is cancelled herein, rendering the 103 rejection of claim 2 moot.

Based upon Schoenblum in view of Yoshinari

[0019] The Examiner rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schoenblum in view of Yoshinari. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims and asks the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of these claims.

Dependent Claim 9

[0020] Claim 9 depends upon independent claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable. It is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowable base claim is also allowable. Additionally, claim 9 may also be allowable for additional independent reasons.

Based upon Schoenblum in view of Assuncao

[0021] The Examiner rejects claim 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schoenblum in view of Assuncao. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of these claims and asks the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of these claims.

Dependent Claim 40

[0022] Claim 40 depends upon independent claim 32. As discussed above, claim 32 is allowable. It is axiomatic that any dependent claim which depends from an allowable base claim is also allowable. Additionally, claim 32 may also be allowable for additional independent reasons.

Dependent Claims

[0023] In addition to its own merits, each dependent claim is allowable for the same reasons that its base claim is allowable. Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of each dependent claim where its base claim is allowable.

Conclusion

[0024] All pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt issuance of the application. If any issues remain that prevent issuance of this application, the Examiner is urged to contact me before issuing a subsequent Action. Please call/email me or my assistant at your convenience.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: 01/28/08

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